

From the desk of the intern

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Today marks the final day of my eight-week long internship with ECN Magazine. When I first began, my knowing of electric design and electronics was probably similar to the way ancient people viewed natural phenomena, a mixture of awe and respect with absolutely no ability to explain the “why” of it all.

Given my lack of electronic understanding, interning at ECN may have seemed odd; ultimately, my decision to intern with ECN came from my desire to learn more about editing, gain experience with the computer programs necessary for copyediting, and witness how a well-run editorial staff functions. While I will not be entering the electronic design community any time soon, I did learn more about technology, at least enough to write the sporadic blog.

During the course of the eight weeks I did learn everything that I initially wanted to know: how to copyedit properly, how to use copyediting programs, and how an editorial staff ought to run. I also learned that other, intangible qualities are necessary for copyediting like unabashedly writing pieces for a publication’s audience, gracefully accepting reader feedback, and casually disregarding the AP Stylebook’s stance on serial commas.

Overall, the main thing I learned from my time at ECN is that people do not fit into distinct either/or categories. Coming into this job, I expected to edit articles riddled with jargon and grammar issues. Instead, the pieces I read were well-written, thoughtful, clear, and concise. I quickly realized that one’s occupation in electronic design did not preclude the ability to communicate well. I also had qualms about my own preparedness to understand the articles I had to read. After all, the most technical experience I had prior with electronics was fixing a blown fuse. Understanding the articles I had to edit was not, to my surprise, incredibly difficult. In fact, nearly everything I read about electronics made sense, leading me to realize that my love of snappy sentences did not cloud my understanding of optoelectronics, signal-conditioning devices, and computer peripherals.

Characteristics of the technologically-inclined and creative are not mutually exclusive. Understanding an integrated circuit does not mean one cannot understand good communication and vice versa. What both come down to is the

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ability to problem solve and think logically.

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